

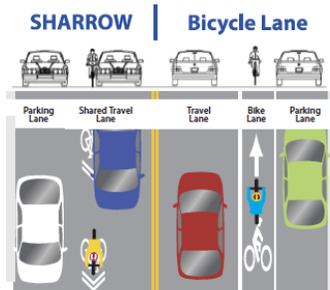
New Roadway hieroglyphics: Sharrows

There's a new sign in town – maybe you've seen it on West Edith, Hillview, University, or First Street downtown. This new sign isn't mounted on a pole, it's painted on the street. Called a "sharrow" or more technically speaking a "shared lane marking" these symbols contain an outline of a bicycle topped by two chevrons. When these symbols were first painted on University Avenue, some concerned residents reported that graffiti had been painted on the street.



Sharrows are symbols placed on the roadway to indicate that motorists should expect to share the lane with bicycles and vice-versa. Sharrows also serve to guide cyclists away from the hazardous "door zone" presented by parked cars, and function as lane positioning cues. You'll often find sharrows used on roadways with on-street parking, heavily travelled by bicycles, yet too narrow for a dedicated bike lane. San Francisco first experimented with sharrows in 2004; in 2009 they were formally adopted by the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Los Altos first introduced sharrows on W. Edith in [date here] and more recently added them to [University Avenue](#), First Street, Hillview (from San Antonio to Eleanor), and Grant Road (by Foothill Plaza). Other planned locations for sharrow markings include [list here].

Here's how they work:



On a roadway marked with sharrows, bicyclists should:

- When parked cars are present bicyclists should ride centered over the sharrow symbol. The bicyclist must be aware that this lane position will place the bicyclist in the travel lane with motor vehicle traffic. Motorists should anticipate the presence of cyclists in the lane and adapt their speed and following distance accordingly. If a motorist wishes to pass the bicyclist, they must maintain a horizontal clearance of at least 3 feet between the car and bicycle, no matter the width of the lane. If the driver cannot maintain this 3 feet they **SHOULD NOT** attempt to pass the cyclist until there is sufficient clearance to

do so.

- When there are long stretches of roadway without parked cars, cyclists should ride as far to the right as "practicable" and allow vehicles to safely pass. What's a "long stretch"? While there's no prescribed distance, one should expect it to be longer than 4-5 car lengths. What you don't want is cyclists weaving in and out of traffic – it's best to ride a straight line, moving to the right when safe.

Los Altos has many streets that are far too narrow to accommodate a bike lane, on-street parking, and two-way traffic. For those streets that are more heavily traveled, a sharrow is one way to help us all share the roadway in a safe and sensible manner. If you have questions about sharrows or other roadway rules, contact Los Altos Police Department. If you observe unsafe roadway behavior or have general traffic complaints, use the City's online form (<http://www.losaltosca.gov/police/webform/online-traffic-complaint-form>). For specific roadway maintenance issues (potholes, etc.), contact Public Works Department or submit your service requests on the City's website (<http://www.losaltosca.gov/publicworks/webform/maintenance-service-request>).

Comment [W1]: 2014??

Comment [W2]: Are there actually "other planned locations...?"

Graphic courtesy of City of Santa Rosa Public Works

